THE CLARION.

Thursday, - - - - - - May 5, 1881

BUY A FARM.

Sensible Advice to Young Men.

We are glad of an opportunity to copy the following article from the New England Farmer. It was written for that journal by Thos. Pearl Briggs, Esq., a Boston gentleman of large experience, who has observed how precarious are the professions and trades usually followed in cities sompared with the calling of a farmer. He says:

With the Bible and Horace Greely, we exhort you to keep out of debt. But there is at least one way of getting into debt that we cer ainly recommend to some young men, viz., to buy a farm. The Bible injunction to "owe no man anything," evidently means to owe another in such a way as to injure or defraud your friend; but in running in deb for a farm the creditor runs no risk, where ho holds a mortgage and receives lawful interest, in fact, he is safer than the debtor.

But few young men will save their money unless compelled to do so. What little real estate the writer of this owns, he owes to the fact that he was in debt for a farm before he was of age, and was compelled to meet the notes, with interest, as they fell due; therefore I know whereof I speak. Let a young man earn $100 or $200, and then buy one of the many New England farms which can be bought for less than the buildings and fences cost, paying in advance as he can, giving his notes for the rest, extending over ten or fifteen years, if necessary, each note to be paid annually, with interest. Suppose you buy a good grazing farm, worth $2,000, paying $200 down, the remaining $1,800 to be paid in nine equal instalments annually. The first year the interest will be at 6 per cent. a little over $100, constantly decreasing after that. Well, now, you can find farms of the above description where there is enough wood and timber on them to more than half pay the cost of the farm. This is especially the case in Maine and Vermont. By a little energy you can sell enough wood in the winter to meet your notes, and raise enough from the farm in the summer to give you a good living. If there is a saw-mill on the farm all the better; or keep half a dozen yoke of steers, and a few colts growing, and they will meet those notes in a way that will astonish you, especially if you are careful to get the best breed and blood, and see that the steers are well matched. A good colt or a good yoke of steers will always sell, and to good advantage on the cost of raising them. Like interest, they grow while you sleep.

It is the young man that has some paying employment during the winter that will most surely and easily pay for his farm. If you haven't wood or timber or bark to sell, teach school, sell books, trees, rat-traps, or something that will give you cash enough to meet your notes, and you are all right. If near a village or city you can very likely find some mechanical or other kind of work that will pay them. When spring comes pitch into your farm with a determination to subdue the soil, with the blessings of heaven, in such a way that she will yield her increase, and own you as her worthy lord and master. To try to get a living off from a farm, and pay for it at the same time, is hard, unless you have paying work during the long winter months; find that and the open door to a home of your own is before you, and easily attained. At the end of one decade you will be more independent and prosperous than most of our merchants, clerks or professional men. If it is true, as it is said to be, that more than 90 per cent. of our business men fail, it behooves you to look well to your choice of occupations. Be sure, if possible, to buy a farm on which you can use a mowing machine and other machinery, and you will be the peer of any man of any profession, as to the number of hours you work, as to time for reading, social blessings, and above all, independence to do as you like.

The city clerk or "counter-jumper," while he may dress well, is comparatively a slave. He owns no home; he must go to his work and stick to it as regularly and as constantly as a person at hard labor in a State prison, and in some cases is treated as hard, generally as they are there. A physician or lawyer is but little better off, unless they are among the few who attain to fame and wealth. By the introduction of labor-saving machinery, the whole aspect of farming has changed within a few years, and it is time people gave up their old-time prejudices, which were well-founded once, but are now a libel on what a farmer's life may be. A slender man and boy can now do, with machinery, what it formerly took half a dozen stout men to accomplish. In such a case the farmer is a manufacturer of grain, beef and pork, ins ead of a "raiser" of these things, and he ought to be one of the happiest, healthiest and holiest of men on the face of the earth.

Influence of the Grange.

Take any neighborhood containing a live, first-class Grange, and compare it as it is now with what it was before the organization of the Grange. You will know for a certainty that the atmosphere of the Grange breeds sturdy independence, intelligent action, and kindly sympathetic feeling. Before the organization of that Grange, who ever heard such talk of the rights of the farmer, the prerogatives of the producer, the encroachments of combinations of capital, or the oppression of railroad monopolies, as you now hear? Did you ever hear anything of farmers maintaining their just position and gaining their rights by united action? No. Did you hear of farmers helping one another in distress and trying to strengthen the bond of common interests that binds them in friendly relations, before the Grange was organized for that purpose? Did you hear of farmers engaging in public speaking or writing for the press, to advocate some measure for their good and advancement? Very rarely. These and a dozen other things that you cannot fail to notice are but the result of the influence of the Grange.—Grange Bulletin.

Poached Eggs and Spinach.

Fill a shallow saucepan with water and salt *quantum suff.*; add a little vinegar and some leaves of parsley. When the water is on the point of boiling (it should never be allowed to boil,) break two or more eggs into it, according to the size of the pan, and put on the cover. When done, take them out carefully, brush them clean on both sides with a paste brush, and cut the eggs with a round fluted paste cutter, so as to get them of a uniform shape. Serve on a puree made as follows; Pick and wash perfectly clean two or three pounds of spinach, put it into a saucepan with a little water and let it boil till quite done; turn it out on a hair sieve to drain; squeeze the water out, and pass the spinach through the sieve. Put a good lump of butter into a saucepan, fry it a light brown, add a pinch of flour, mix well, put in the spinach, pepper and salt to taste, and a little milk; stir well; dispose the spinach on a dish, laying the poached eggs on top of it and a border of fried sippits around it.

RYE MUFFINS—One pint of flour, one pint rye-meal, two tablespoonfuls of yeast, milk enough to make thick batter.

Asparagus Culture.

New England Farmer.]

Asparagus thrives best on a deep sandy loam. It should by no means be planted on stony land, for the stones will obstruct the tender sprouts and make them grow crooked, and will also interfere with the knife in cutting. The best land is the fine sandy loam of our corn fields or plain land.

The plants are grown from seed sown thickly in a seed bed the year before the field is planted; if only a few hundred are wanted for a family supply, they can be bought of some nurseryman more cheaply than they can be raised from seed.

The seed is sown early in spring, in rows, by a machine, about as thickly as onions, and cultivated by the shovel hoe and weeded by hand in precisely the same manner required for a bed of onions. The plants are in better order for transplanting at one year old than older.

There is a great deal of controversy as to the value of the so called varieties of asparagus. I am satisfied that there is more value in good land, in good tilth and heavy manuring than any differehce in seed. I have planted the Conover's Colossal alongside the common kind, and could see no difference in favor of the former. Still, I believe that seed selected in the way that Capt. Moore, of Concord, practices, is worth more than all the trouble it costs to save it; in fact, it is one of the secrets of his uniform success in growing asparagus, the others being good land, heavy manuring, wide planting and thorough tillage.

His method of saving seed is as follows: Early in spring he goes through his field and marks those stools which throw unusually large sprouts, by driving a stake near them; the men who cut the sprouts daily for market are instructed to let these stools grow up and run to seed; thus they grow up and blossom without danger of mixing the pollen from inferior stems, which are kept closely cut. The seed gathered from the staked stools may be expected and really do prove of superior quality.

The land for asparagus is prepared by plowing in a good dressing of manure, harrowing and rolling; the furrows are then struck out with a large plow, three and a half feet apart, going several times in the same furrow, and finally shoveling out the furrow by hand, so as to plant the roots six or eight inches below the general surface after the furrows are filled. The furrow is dressed with some fine compost and the roots planted a foot apart, covering at first only lightly with a hoe, so as not to smother the young plants with to much covering. The ridge between the rows is usually planted with carrots or beets and after this crop is harvested the ridges are leveled down.

The next year the asparagus will require cultivating and hoeing to keep it in order, but by no means crop it till the third year from planting, or the fourth from seed. It should receive a moderate dressing of fine manure every spring, which is worked in with the disk harrow. The object in planting the roots so deeply is to give the harrow a chance to work over the tops of the roots without injuring them. The cropping and marketing of asparagus needs a good deal of care; it should be cut every morning before breakfast, and tied up directly in bunches. The best knife is a common butcher knife, filed with saw teeth for three inches from the point. With this a man can cut rapidly for an hour without stopping to sharpen, which is not true of any other style of knife I have seen. The knife will need grinding and filing daily.

The frame used for bunching is a simple affair, and can be made at home by an ingenious person. It consists of four pegs driven into a horizontal board, with another board set up on edge at the end of the first and nailed to it. The pegs are so placed as to guage the size of the bunch, the standard size being such that three dozen bunches just fill a bushel box. The best tying material is Russia matting, and the strings must be wet and drawn very tightly. It requires some skill and a good deal of care, to tie up asparagus well; and much depends upon the care used in making it look well.

Asparagus is one of the most wholesome and delicious of all vegetables. It comes so early in the spring that nothing competes with it except Southern produce, and its culture and popularity are yearly increasing. It is so easily transported, and bears carriage so well, that a good deal of it is produced forty miles or more from market, and large amounts are sent here from New Jersey, and even from Carolina in early spring.

THE HOUSEKEEPER.

FRENCH TOAST.—Take three eggs, beat well, and add one-half teacupful of milk; dip into this mixture slices of bread, and fry them in butter till slightly browned; serve piping hot.

DELICATE WHITE SPONGE CAKE.—Take one tumbler and a half of sugar, one tumbler of flour, the well-beaten whites of ten eggs, two teaspoonfuls of cream of tartar (no soda); flavor to taste.

WARRANTED NOT TO KEEP.—Ginger snaps that will not "keep" unless you hide the jar are made from this receipt: One cup of molasses (New Orleans preferred), one cup of butter, half a cup of hot water, a pirch of salt, ginger to suit your taste, one tablespoonful is the usual quantity, two teaspoonfuls of saleratus, mix quite hard, and roll them.

TO PREPARE CABBAGE.—A nice way to prepare cabbage for immediate use is to cut enough into fine shreds to fill a quart dish; pepper and salt to taste. Sprinkle over it a teaspoonful of sugar. Into two-thirds of a pint of vinegar put a teaspoonful of butter, and let it boil, then pour over the prepared cabbage. Cover tightly and send to the table.

COFFEE CAKE—Take one cup of strong coffee, one cup of molasses, one cup of butter, one cup of sugar, one cup of raisins, and one cup currants, four cups of flour, one nutmeg grated, one teaspoonful of cinnamon, half a teaspoonful of soda or saleratus, mix the butter, molasses and sugar together, stir the spices into the flour, dissolve the soda, stir the coffee and flour in by degrees, lastly put in the fruit. Bake in a slow oven, butter the tin well, and unless you are sure your oven will not bake too hard, you had better put a paper in the bottom of the tin. This cake keeps well. With more fruit it makes a good fruit cake.

Culture of Beans.

The bean crop of our country is an important one, and the industry required in its production is highly worthy of encouragement. As an article of food, for man and beast, they contain nutriment in an exceptionally concentrated state, being nearly twice as nutritious as wheat, and four or five times as much so as buckwheat. Beans are not as exhaustive to the soil as many other crops. That they may be grown without any exhaustion of the soil is not pretended, but I have grown them, and seen them grown, on soil which would not produce over ten or twelve bushels of rye, with the same expense of culture, and still yielding a greater number of bushels to the acre. The necessary culture of the crop admirably fits the soil for the following one, especially if it be wheat. Like all other crops, weeds are its bane, and therefore clean culture is essential, and the necessary stirring of the soil exposes the greater portion to the action of sun and air.

As stated above, beans will grow and produce fairly on poor soil, but are more remunerative when grown on better soil, but such soil should have been made rich by previous culture. Manuring this crop acts more for prolonged growth of foliage, than for grain, whereas the half-saturated soil tends to greater fruitfulness and early maturity. The keeping of weeds in subjection is much easier when the plowing is done some weeks in advance of planting, and then with cultivator and harrow, destroying them as they make their appearance, thus fining and better preparing the soil for a crop. The proper time for planting depends upon the season, as it is never safe to plant till danger of frosts is past. They should be planted in rows, not less than two and one-half feet apart and the hills not less than one foot apart; however, the distance should be regulated by the variety and habit of growth. Four or five beans in a hill are enough, and these may be put in by drill or by hand, and evenly covered, the soil being compressed over them. Like all other crops, good seed is of great importance; late grown seed usually gives the best satisfaction, and it should be from a crop which grew more to seed than vine.

As to variety I need not suggest, as probably there is not much difference in profit, unless it be from local circumstances. Mediums and Blue Pods may be ripened and taken from the ground in time for wheat or other winter crops; also bringing good prices in market. The large seeded varieties are more uncertain, and require a longer season. The cultivator should be started as soon as practicable after they are fairly out of the ground, and wherever necessary, the hoe should be used. It is always best to cultivate beans when the foliage is not wet. Cultivate sufficiently to keep down the weeds. Harvesting will be the subject of a future article.—W. H. White, in Country Gentleman.